

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for starting up a flowline suitable for conveying hydrocarbons, said flowline being extended over the seabed from a wellhead and terminating at a joint end, said joint end being suitable for connection to a subsea riser, said method comprising:
a first stage of inducing elongation of said flowline; and
a second stage of fixing said joint end with respect to said seabed to maintain said flowline in its elongated position.

2. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising permitting displacement of said joint end in a direction of elongation of said flowline and prohibiting displacement of said joint end in an opposite direction.

3. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising guiding said joint end in translation during elongation of said flowline.

4. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a preliminary stage before said first stage comprising laying, said flowline on said seabed and connecting said subsea riser to said flowline.

5. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 4, wherein said subsea riser is connected to said joint end during said preliminary stage.

6. (Currently Amended) A system for starting up a flowline suitable for conveying hydrocarbons, the system comprising:

~~said a flowline extends~~ extended over a seabed from a wellhead and ~~terminates~~ terminated at a joint end of said flowline, said joint end being suitable for connection to a subsea riser, and said flowline being ~~able~~ operable to stretch;

a locking system for fixing said joint end with respect to said seabed for maintaining said flowline in ~~said a~~ stretched position after said flowline has been stretched.

7. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 6, wherein said locking system includes a unidirectional arresting device operable to allow displacement of said joint end in a direction of elongation of said flowline and to prohibit displacement of said joint end in an opposite direction.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~The system as claimed in claim 7;~~ A system for starting up a flowline suitable for conveying hydrocarbons, the system comprising:

a flowline extended over a seabed from a wellhead and terminating at a joint end of said flowline, said joint end being suitable for connection to a subsea riser, and said flowline being operable to stretch;

a locking system for fixing said joint end with respect to said seabed for maintaining said flowline in a stretched position after said flowline has been stretched, said locking system including a unidirectional arresting device operable to allow displacement of said joint end in a direction of elongation of said flowline and to prohibit displacement of said joint end in an opposite direction;

~~further comprising~~ a guidance system including a movable trolley, said joint end ~~is being~~ connectable to said trolley[~~[,]~~]; and

a slide device on which said movable trolley is slidable in said direction of elongation of said flowline.

9. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said slide device comprises a base anchored in said seabed, and said rail is fixed to said base.

10. (Currently Amended) The system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said unidirectional arresting device comprises a rack, mounted in the direction of said rail, and a ratchet on said trolley[[, and]] engageable in said rack for allowing displacement of said trolley as said flowline is stretched and for prohibiting return displacement of said trolley.

11. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 8, wherein said trolley comprises a reception device operable for receiving said joint end of said flow line.

12. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 11, further comprising a subsea riser having a free end; said trolley comprises a second reception device operable for receiving a free end of said subsea riser for enabling interconnecting said joint end of said flow line and said free end of said subsea riser.

13. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 8, further comprising a subsea riser having a free end; said trolley comprises a reception device operable for receiving said free end of said subsea riser for interconnecting said joint end of said flow line and said free end of said subsea riser.

14. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 8, wherein said slide device comprises a rail extending in said direction of elongation along which said trolley is slidable.

15. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 6, further comprising a subsea riser having a free end; said subsea riser is extended in a catenary.

16. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, further comprising extending said riser in a catenary.